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# USDA Inside Information

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Energy activities and a packet...some results from that SAIOSDA meeting...an ash report from Washington State...and a few bits and pieces of things going on around D.C. These, and maybe more, fit inside "Inside..." this week.

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## AN ENERGY PACKET

Some of you may want a copy, if you haven't received one already, of the department's packet of materials being distributed--in various combinations--on the President's energy conservation program in agriculture. For a packet, or other information on this energy conservation program, contact Paul Darby in GPA, (202) 447-8979 or Bob Norton, GPA, (202) 472-6274.

The packet contains a number of items that might be useful...a suggested folder for use with special audiences; a special envelope in which to distribute energy-related materials; a fact sheet on USDA's energy efficiency programs; talking points which are being distributed to officials for incorporation into talks or speeches; and several other documents, including details on award programs and nomination forms. (Farmers Home Administration and Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices are the primary local points where farmers can obtain information about the award program.)

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## WHAT'S WHAT, WHERE

There's quite a bit of energy related information available here and there. One special publication being produced at USDA will list what USDA agencies are doing about energy...what programs are available for farmers and the rural public...how farmers and other rural folks can learn more about the programs...and names, phone numbers, and addresses of contacts in each agency who can tell about the major agency programs.

We're pushing toward an early publishing date. More later.

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## SETTLING THE ASH...

We're still intrigued with reports about Mt. St. Helens...just as we are over the exceptional natural phenomena this year that's working on almost our entire hemisphere.

Latest "Ash & Agriculture" report on Mt. St. Helens problems, originating from Washington State U., points out that Christmas tree shearing crews in some cases are unwilling to shear ash-laden trees, mainly because of excess knife wear.

Other items: the farmer who ran a chisel through hayland covered with ash and found that water intake increased enough to save plants...the livestock owner who noticed that the ash is making animals' hair stiff; now he's worried over their ability to stay warm next winter...still another operator reported that the bale chamber in his hay baler rusted overnight. Later use shined it up like new. And in still another area, an SCS technician reported that a crust of about 1/4 inch formed in an area that had had a great deal of blowing sand. The crust seems to have stabilized the wind erosion.

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#### COASTING ALONG

Sunavagun! We just received word that the week of Aug. 2-9--that's last week--was "Coast Week." The whole of 1980 is the "Year of the Coast," and Oct. 3-5 has been designated as "Fall on the Coast Week." Guess Hurricane Allen was celebrating.

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#### SAIOSDA'S NEW OFFICERS

New officers selected to lead the Southern Agricultural Information Officers of the State Departments of Agriculture (SAIOSDA) during 1980-81 are: President, Sonny Smith, South Carolina; Vice President, Lynn Williams, Tennessee; Secretary-Treasurer, Ray Schreiner, Virginia; and Member-at-Large, Roxanne Brown, Kentucky.

The 1981 SAIOSDA workshop and meeting will be held the latter part of next July or early August at Myrtle Beach, S.C.

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#### ONWARD AND UPWARD

Christie Schuetz, U. of Illinois, who sometime ago sent us a copy of "Dwarf Shrubs for the Midwest," an interesting bulletin on the subject, writes that the U. of Ill. Press has brought out a cloth-bound edition of the same book. It sells for \$20 and can be ordered from the Press at Box 5081, Station A, Champaign, Ill. 61820. The paperback edition sells for \$7 and should be ordered from the Agricultural Publications Office.

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#### ANOTHER DROUTH CASUALTY

GPA photographer Fred Witte journeyed to Kansas a week or so ago to pick up some drouth pictures...pulled a stunt that violates all safety practices by riding on a moving tractor from which he would shoot.

You guessed it. He fell off. Luckily he only suffered some minor bruises and cuts but was hospitalized overnight. He's back home now. (Yes, his pictures were pretty good.)

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#### JOB HUNTERS: TRY GPA

If you've 6 years' experience in radio, film, television or audiovisual and are interested in a GS-12 spot with GPA, apply before Aug. 27 for the job. The position entails being a sound director for recordings for motion pictures, slide films, television videotapes, etc., and will be located in GPA's Video Film Center.

Applications should be sent to Pamela Keene, (202) 447-5833, Office of Operations and Finance, Room 43-W, USDA, Washington, 20250. Remember, there's a closing date on applications of Aug. 27.